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SSLC exam begins under COVID cloud

SSLC students offering prayers before writing the exam at a centre in city this morning. Picture right shows Mysuru-Kodagu MP Pratap Simha instilling confidence among the students as DDPI Dr. Panduranga looks on.

Mysuru, June 25 (MTY&BCT)- The Secondary School Leaving Certificate (SSLC) examinations commenced in Karnataka this morning with Second Language paper (English, Kannada) amid relaxation of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. In Mysuru, the exam passed off peacefully in 139 centres in the district and 48 centres in city.

As many as 37,738 students had registered for the exam in Mysuru and 35,935 wrote the exam today with 1,803 absentees as they were denied hall tickets for lack of attendance. 45 students were from Containment Zones and four students had cold and fever. They were made to write the exam separately. Schools (exam centres) ensured that masks were worn, surroundings sanitised, social distancing norms were followed and other precautionary measures were taken. All the students underwent thermal screening at the centres and were provided hand sanitisers and masks. The exam is being conducted amidst unprecedented precautions and each classroom had around 18 to 20 students. The State Govt. decided to go ahead with exams with utmost precautions after the parents, students and political parties expressed their fear of health risk during exams. Many mock drills, inspections were conducted and guidelines have been issued to the centres.

The examination will end on July 4. Students in Containment Zones and those with symptoms such as cough, cold and fever were made to sit in another classroom and write the examination. All the exam centres were opened as early as 7 am and students and parents started arriving at the centres at 7.30 am. Exams began at 10.30 am and ended at 1.30 pm.

(See EXAM on page 6)

Eight-month-old baby among 22 positive cases in Mysuru today

Mysuru, June 25 (RK,MTY& BCT)- Mysuru again reported 22 COVID-19 positive cases today (June 25).

Of them, 12 were asymptomatic and the rest were symptomatic and had fever. A majority of them had a travel history of Bengaluru.

A seven-year-old boy from Paparam Street, Nazarbad, who is a primary contact of P-9560, tested positive. A 62-year-old male from Nanjangud, who has influenza-like Illness (under investigation), an eight-month-old baby from Dattagalli and a primary contact of P-9758 tested positive for the disease today.

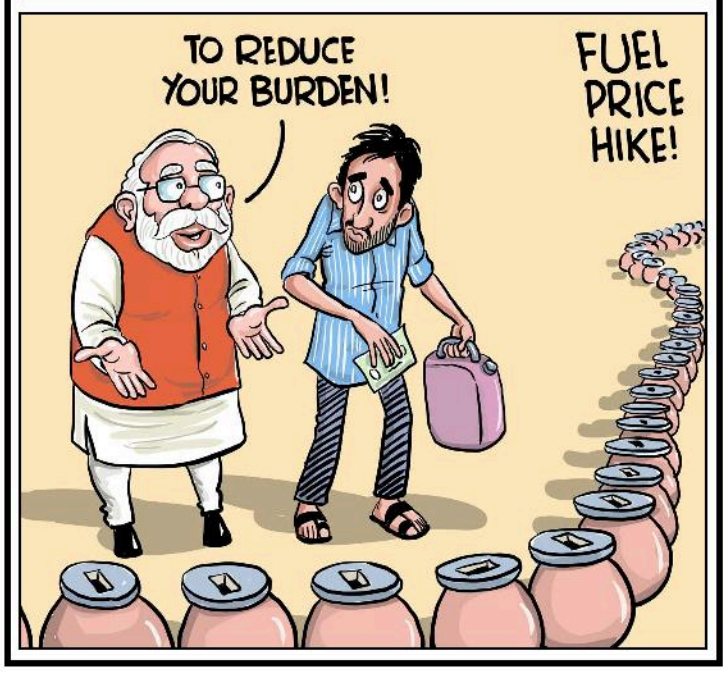
A 48-year-old female from Udayagiri, who has a travel history of Bengaluru, tested positive. A 28-year-old male from Eranagere tested positive and his travel history is being investigated. Another 45-year-old male from Kuruburu near T. Narasipur, who had a travel history of Bengaluru, has contracted the disease. Another person 38-year-old from Rajivnagar, who had a travel history of Bengaluru, tested positive.

Two Police Head Constables from Nanjangud Town Police Station, a 41-year-old male and a 45-year-old male, contracted the disease from their contacts. Three persons from Nanjangud, a 24-year-old male, a 22-year-old male and a 24-year-old female tested positive today.

A 21-year-old female from Nanjangud having a travel history of Chamarajanagar, a 28-year-old female from Bannur, a one-year-old boy from Devaraja Mohalla tested positive. A 47-year-old male from Neelakantanagar in Nanjangud, a 31-year-old male from Ramaswamy Layout in Nanjangud and a 32-year-old male also from Ramaswamy Layout in Nanjangud have contracted the disease.

(See POSITIVE on page 6)

STAR PUNCH By Satish Acharya



Proposed multi-level parking lot at Gaadi Chowk draws flak from citizens

Mysuru, June 25 (MK&DM)- The Mysuru City Corporation's (MCC) move to construct a multi-level parking lot at Gaadi Chowk on Bidaram Krishnappa Mandir Road in the heart of the city has met with severe opposition from local residents and building owners in the vicinity.

The Bidaram Krishnappa Mandir Road, which is close to Narayana Shastry Road, is comparatively a narrow stretch. The MCC's move to construct a multi-level parking lot along this road (at Gaadi Chowk), which comes under MCC Ward No.23, has been severely objected to by local residents who complain that the parking lot will pose a big hurdle for their safe movement and to shops in the vicinity. The residents question the MCC's motive of choosing the busy and buzzing area of Gaadi Chowk to build a multi-level vehicle parking lot.

Sachin, a local resident told 'Star of Mysore' that a school building constructed in one-acre area of Gaadi Chowk was inaugurated by the then Urban Development Minister V.S. Krishna Iyer in August, 1984. However, after some years, the school was evacuated and the building was used as night shelter for destitutes and the homeless. But with the passage of time, the building became dilapidated following which the shelter home was shut. Later, the MCC planned to construct the multi-level parking lot in this one-acre land. However, the local residents are of the opinion that construction of a parking lot in this space will not be of much help in solving the vehicle parking problem. Also, the parking lot instead of becoming a boon will be a bane for them, they said and urged the MCC to drop the plan.

With the space lying vacant for now, the public are using it as a garbage dumping yard. As such, the Gaadi Chowk area has become a nuisance for pedestrians and motorists as foul smell has been emanating from the dumped wastes and garbage. The entire area lacks even a semblance of hygiene and cleanliness. On one side of the area, the MCC has been using the space for parking only a few of its vehicles, while the rest of the space is occupied by private vehicles. The residents complain that there would have been no hygiene and cleanliness problem in the area had the MCC utilised the space in an appropriate manner.

The residents also complain that the area has become a haven for alcoholics, especially during the night. Also, there are instances where tipplers have thrown stones at adjacent buildings, they said and added that the spot has also become a haven for illegal activities during the night.

Upset with the MCC's move to construct a multi-level parking lot, the local residents have demanded the MCC to create a Children's Park in the one-acre space. Pointing out that MCC Ward 23 has no park other than the Freedom Fighters Park in Subbarayanakere Grounds, they say that a park is more needed for them than the parking lot. The creation of a park will put a full stop for dumping of wastes and garbage, besides becoming a venue for the people to jog and do physical exercises and also a play station for kids. This apart, the area can become free of the menace of alcoholics, they explain.

Meanwhile, Corporator Pramila Bharath told 'Star of Mysore' that the previous MCC Commissioner Shilpa Nag, who had inspected Gaadi Chowk area, had observed that the spot was not suitable for the construction of the multi-Level parking lot. But still, the MCC, going ahead with its plan, has reserved Rs.144 crore in the Budget for the construction of the parking lot.

On the other hand, local residents have been constantly demanding creation of a Children's Park at the spot. Taking note of the majority public opinion, she raised the issue at the MCC budget meeting, during which she pressed for creation of a park in the area, she pointed out.

K.R. Hospital starts collection of vehicle parking fee

Mysuru, June 25 (SBD&DM)- In a bid to prevent misuse of its vacant spaces, the K.R. Hopsital has launched 'Pay and Park' vehicle parking facility at its premises. Earlier, the Hospital had no parking fee.

With the launch of the parking facility, those coming to K.R. Hospital and Cheluvamba Hospital, have to park their vehicles at the designated parking lot and pay the stipulated parking fee.

One B. Mahadevu of Bhyrava Vehicle Parking Contract Agency, has bagged the tender for operating the parking lot in K.R. Hospital premises. The K.R. Hospital authorities have fixed the parking fee for different type of vehicles based on the duration of parking, according to which the fee for cycle parking is Rs. 2 for the first hour, Rs. 4 for 1 to 5 hours and Rs. 8 for 5 to 24 hours. For two-wheelers, the parking fee is Rs.5 for the first hour, Rs. 10 for 1 to 5 hours and Rs. 20 for 5 to 24 hours. Likewise, the fee for autos is Rs. 10 for the first hour, Rs. 20 for 1 to 5 hours and Rs. 35 for 5 to 24 hours, while that for four-wheelers is Rs.15 for the first hour, Rs. 30 for 1 to 5 hours and Rs. 50 for 5 to 24 hours.

Pass facility

A pass facility is also available for frequent visitors to the Hospital on a single day. The multiple-entry pass fee for cycles is Rs. 5, for two-wheelers Rs. 15, for autos Rs. 30 and for four-wheelers Rs. 40. The pass holders can move in and out of the Hospital with their vehicles any number of times on that particular day. The parking free board mentions the GST number of the parking contractor and also carries a caution in bold, which says that the contractor cannot be held liable for any damage or theft of any belongings, the vehicle owners may have left behind after parking their vehicle.

Burden for poor

With the launch of the 'Pay and Park' facility, many poor patients visiting the K.R. Hospital are unhappy with the decision of the authorities. Maintaining that most of the patients visiting the Hospital are poor and cannot afford to pay parking fees, they are of the opinion that when they are able to get treatment and also medicines for just Rs.10, the collection of parking fee is not correct. They also say that the Hospital, which is famous as 'Doddaspatre' among the rural folk, is most visited by poor patients and as such collection of vehicle parking fee is a burden for them, especially when they get admitted or have to wait for long on some occasions. Claiming that most of the poor patients come to the hospital in the vehicles of others or autos, they complained that demanding additional fee for just a few minutes beyond one hour is disappointing.

Even as poor patients are complaining, some other patients are of the opinion that the 'Pay and Park' initiative is a right idea. Maintaining that the Hospital premises was being rampantly misused as many people who go to neighbouring places such as Irwin Road, K.T. Street, Railway Station, Bus Stand and other prominent business places in the heart of the city, used to park their vehicles in the K.R. Hospital premises as parking was hitherto free and also there was security at the entry gate, they opined that the Hospital authorities, though belatedly, have taken the right decision to launch 'Pay and Park' facility in order to stop such misuse.

Meanwhile, the Hospital authorities defended the decision, saying that the rampant misuse of the vacant spaces in the Hospital premises deprived the patients and their attendants of vehicle parking space. Noting that with haphazard parking of vehicles, a few vehicles thefts too were being reported from the premises, despite security, they said that the parking fee collection was introduced based on a Govt. directive. The 'Pay and Park' facility is existent in almost all other Hospitals attached to Government Medical Colleges across the State and this action is also aimed at putting a stop to unauthorised parking of vehicles in the hospital premises, they added.

VOICE OF THE READER

COVID-19: Some thoughts on the Academic Year 2020-21

Sir,

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) has interrupted the Academic Year 2020-21 from KG to PG and even Professional courses had to be closed indefinitely. The online classes for KG to V Standard is banned by the Government in order to reduce stress among growing children which is no doubt to be welcomed. Even the online session for higher classes is unable to reach village and tribal children who form more than 60 percent in the State. The only beneficiaries are English medium students residing in cities and big towns.

The ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) has come to the conclusion that the COVID pandemic will continue till November and as such it would be better to close down all types o educational institutions till the end of November 2020 and then plan to re-open in December in a phased way, if conditions are conducive.

It is a well-known fact that 70 percent of the institutions in India have no proper infrastructure like good drinking water, toilets and ventilated class rooms. The class rooms are small in size and so it is not possible for maintaining social distance if the Institutions are re-opened. Most of the rural institutions are crowded and lack hygienic conditions.

In these circumstances it would be better to declare 2020-21 as Zero Academic Year for classes to KG to IX and during the 2021-22 Academic Year they may be given reduced syllabus to cover both the classes in a single year. Our teachers are capable of doing it provided the Government reduces all holidays and vacations.

For the students of SSLC and PUC, classes may be conducted in December with utmost care to enable them to appear for the public examinations. Degree, PG and Professional courses may be considered after a review in November. Health and safety of children are more important than the conduct of classes in a hurry.

It is a known fact that the parents are totally exhausted in looking after their children during the pandemic period without school and outing. Let them think positively that this is an opportunity for the parents to build a strong bond with their children which is very much lacking in modern society.

Parents are advised to teach their children some hobbies, indoor games and try to involve them in day-to-day household duties. Reading habit may be cultivated. Let us hope for a brighter tomorrow and I am sure the students at all levels will understand the problem and co-operate with their family members.

The Government should ensure the students that the Academic Year will not be wasted.

— Rtn. Y.N. Sanjeeva Rao,
Retired Principal
Mysuru
24.6.2020

Snake Shyam rescues Cobra from house

Mysuru, June 25 (KS)- City's well-known snake rescuer and wildlife conservationist Snake Shyam, who responded to a phone call from the public about the presence of Cobra at a house near Sai Baba Mandir at Sathagalli, not only rushed and rescued the Cobra, but also pacified the woman of the house who was in a state of shock.

Yesterday at about 11.15 pm, the woman, who was staying alone at her house went to the bathroom. As soon as she switched on the light, she heard a hissing sound and turned to the direction of the sound only to see a big Cobra coiled to the tub with its hood open.

The woman managed to rush out of the house and began screaming for help. Soon, her neighbours came to know about the presence of a Cobra in the bathroom and immediately called Snake Shyam.

Snake Shyam, who not only responded to the call at the late hour, rushed to the woman's house at Sathagalli and rescued the Cobra from the bathroom. Shyam then consoled the woman, who was weeping, provided her water and pacified her.

Had not the woman switched on the light of the bathroom, there were possibilities of the snake biting the woman out of fear and for self-defence. Shyam left the place only after explaining the people about snakes and precautions to be taken to prevent them from entering houses.

CBSE's remaining 10th, 12th exams in July cancelled

New Delhi, June 25 (Agencies)- The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) Board this morning told the Supreme Court that the Class 10 and Class 12 exams have been cancelled.

The exams that were scheduled to be held from July 1 to July 15 will be conducted as and when the situation is suitable to conduct the exams, the CBSE Board told the Supreme Court. Giving its final word on the cancellation of CBSE Board Exam-2020, the CBSE Board said the scheme has been set up where Class 12 students will be assessed on the basis of last 3 exams. Students will also have an option to opt for exams that are to be conducted later.

A Supreme Court bench led by Justice A.M. Khanwilkar heard the plea seeking cancellation of remaining CBSE exams due to COVID-19.

The Indian Certificate of Secondary Education (ICSE) Board has also shared that it would broadly follow the decision taken by CBSE in the matter.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta appeared for CBSE and HRD Ministry. Advocate Rishi Malhotra for the petitioner shared that Maharashtra, Odisha and Delhi have shared their inability to conduct the pending board exams.

A few papers of CBSE 10th, 12th Board Exams-2020 were pending when the Schools and Colleges were closed. Exams from Mar. 19 to Mar. 31 were deferred till April, and then postponed by the HRD Ministry as a nationwide lockdown was announced on Mar. 25. These exams were then deferred and scheduled to be conducted between July 1 and July 15.

CBSE had shared its intent to cancel the exams abroad and to conduct exams for only 29 subjects out of the remaining lot. The Board released the date sheet for the exams in May. Parents, however, quickly opposed the move. Concerns increased when the COVID-19 cases spiralled in the country.

In their plea, the parents said that conducting examinations across over 15,000 centres at this stage would unnecessarily expose children to the risk of contracting COVID. It also asked the Board to allot marks to students for the remaining papers on the basis of their internal assessment and performance in practical and examinations they took in March.

KSRTC rural services yet to start in full as confusion persists over operation of buses

Mysuru, June 25 (SPN&DM)- Days after the Government announced significant relaxations in COVID-19 lockdown curbs, allowing Intra-State public transport, the KSRTC Mysuru Division authorities are yet to take a firm decision on the quantum of operations to rural areas.

The KSRTC Mysuru Rural Division, which has classified routes of operation as A, B and C categories, is yet to take a decision on resumption of night halt bus services to rural areas and as well as the frequency of operation of trips during the day. With uncertainty over operation of trips to rural areas still persistent, the drivers and conductors, who have returned to work in full attendance following the resumption of bus services, are forced to wait with their buses for hours by the side of roads around the Sub-Urban Bus Stand for carrying out trips. Although there are many commuters on rural routes and ridership is better, the confusion among the authorities has led to the failure of restoration of bus services to rural areas on a full-scale, it is learnt.

Amidst all this, the drivers and conductors are complaining that they are often asked to be present in full strength on all days, though bus services have not re-started on a full-scale. Alleging that the authorities in Mysuru are not following the KSRTC's head office directive asking all its divisions to follow rotation policy for drivers and conductors, they claimed that sometimes they are asked to go on leave when they report for duty.

Meanwhile, KSRTC Mysuru Rural Divisional Controller R. Ashok Kumar said that the Division is operating 298 routes in total from all its seven depots in the district at present. Pointing out that 702 buses were in operation from Mysuru on normal days in the pre-lockdown period, he said that there were over 3,500 staff attached to the Division and about Rs. 11 crore was needed for payment of their salaries every month. Expressing disappointment over loss of revenue due to lockdown and poor ridership following resumption of bus services, he expressed hope that ridership and so also the revenue earnings may substantially increase in the coming days.

Three months on, KSRTC resumes AC bus services

Mysuru, June 25 (RK&BCT)- After a gap of over three months, the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) has resumed AC bus services in a phased manner from today.

Temperature inside buses will be maintained at 24-25 degrees Celsius as per the norm. To prevent the spread of COVID, blankets will not be provided in the night-service buses and passengers must carry their own blankets.

From the Mysuru Sub-Urban Bus Stand (Rural Division), four AC bus service has begun on the Mysuru-Bengaluru route, two buses each to Madikeri and Virajpet and one bus to Manipal has been resumed. The number of passengers have been restricted to 20 and the frequency and the number of buses will be increased based on demand, said R. Ashok Kumar, KSRTC Rural Divisional Controller.

Before a bus leaves the KSRTC station, it is fully sanitised and all the passengers will be thermal-screened to check their temperature. Even at the end-point or destination, the buses will get sanitised, he added.

KSRTC City Divisional Controller Nagaraj said that there are no plans as yet to start the AC bus service within the city. All the IT companies in Hebbal area have asked the staff to work from home and as such, there will not be a demand for AC buses. Also, the existing normal bus service too is operating with empty buses most of the times as people are still scared to board a bus, he said.

Decoding Mythology

Dr. Devdutt Pattanaik - Author, Speaker, Illustrator, Mythologist

Four-headed
Vishnu of Kashmir

The Chaturmukha Vishnu is a very rare form of Vishnu once worshipped in Kashmir from the 8th and 9th century, when it was an important centre of Hinduism. The image shows Vishnu with four heads. Three clear faces are those of Vishnu, the Narasimha or the Lion face, and the face of the Varaha avatar. The fourth face varies according to scriptures. Different scriptures describe the fourth head as either a demonic face or the face of Kapila or the face of Lakshmi, or even Hayagriva, the horse. In artwork, sometimes, the fourth head is absent and only the other three heads are shown.

This form of Vishnu has not four, but eight arms. Four arms hold the traditional conch shell, discus, mace and lotus flower. The other four hands hold a bow, an arrow, a sword and a shield. Sometimes, the image just has four arms. The gada (mace) is replaced with the gadanari or it is personified as a woman. The chakra is replaced by the chakrapurusha, a wheel embodied as a man.

In the post-Gupta period, we find importance given to Vishnu's weapons, symbolised in anthropomorphic forms. The gadanari is not very popular. In South Indian temples, we find many images of the Chakrapurusha, also known as Sudarshan. The vahana or the mount depicted is Garuda. He is sometimes accompanied by Lakshmi. There is no specific story associated with it. As Hinduism waned from Kashmir, this image died out and did not become popular.

In the Gupta period, imperial lines and dynasties associated themselves with Hinduism and Vishnu. Great value was given to the 'dominating and aggressive' forms of Narasimha and Varaha. Today, however, greater value is placed on the 'bhakti' forms of Ram and Krishna, whose stories are told in the Ramayana and Mahabharata. Only in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, we find temples of Narasimha and Varaha.

There is no clear story about why Vishnu has four heads. In some places, Vishnu has only three, Brahma has four and Shiva has five heads to show their relative power. The four heads may link to Vishnu being identified as Krishna, his brother, Balarama, his son, Pradyumna and his grandson, Aniruddha.

The only place, outside of Kashmir, where this image is found, is in Khajuraho, built in the tenth century. The Lakshman temple in Khajuraho has an image of Vishnu Vaikuntha. Here, he has three heads and four hands. The only legend associated with this image is that of the creation of a monster, with the head of a lion and a wild boar. He was told that when another creature who looked exactly like him appeared, he would be destroyed. This is why Vishnu took this form to destroy it.

Today, nobody worships this Vaikuntha form of Vishnu.

In many ways, the image connects royalty to the boar and the lion, symbols of aggression and domination. The hidden face represents the aspect of kingship that will always remain hidden from the public.

devdutt@devdutt.com

MLA Ramdas performs *guddali puja* for RO Drinking Water Unit

Mysuru, June 25 (RKB&KS)- To provide potable drinking water to the residents, MLA S.A. Ramdas performed *guddali puja* for the installation of a RO Drinking Water Unit near Banumaiah Circle in MCC Ward No. 51 yesterday.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramdas said that the RO Unit would be installed at a cost of Rs. 12 lakh under the 14th Finance Scheme to provide pure drinking water to the residents of Ramavilas Road, Kshetraiah Road, Togari Beedhi, Banumaiah Road, Kempananjamma Agrahara, Devamba Agrahara and Cheluvamba Agrahara. 20 litres of pure water would be provided at a cost of Rs. 5 and added that a separate borewell would be sunk for the purpose.

Corporator B.V. Manjunath, Vani Vilas Water Works Executive Engineer Nagaraja Murthy, Assistant Executive Engineer Vinay Kumar, Ward 15 Engineers Kruthika and Madhu, BJP Mandal Vice-President Hemanth Kumar, Yuva Morcha President Mallikarjun, Ward President Gururaj Shenoy, T.S. Aruna, Venkatesh, Lakshmi, Narayana, Ashok and others were present.

Help Centre to assist Madiwala community and Savitha Samaja members to submit applications for COVID-19 relief

Mysuru, June 25 (KS)- A Help Centre to assist Madiwala (washermen) community and Savitha Samaja (barbers) members submit free online application for COVID-19 relief was inaugurated at Madiwala Association Office in Saraswathipuram here recently.

The Help Centre, started by Belaku Samsthe and Veera Madiwala Sangha, was inaugurated by Belaku Samsthe Founder K.M. Nishanth and Corporator Vedavathi.

Speaking on the occasion, Nishanth said that Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa had announced Rs. 5,000 relief to workers of unorganised sector, who are facing financial crisis following lockdown besides announcing relief to the members of Madiwala community and Savitha Samaja for which online applications has to be submitted. The Help Centre will be open from 10 am to 5 pm till June 30.

Corporator Vedavathi said that many persons are finding it difficult to submit online applications and internet cafes were collecting money to submit online applications. Hence the Help Centre has been opened to assist the people to submit online applications.

Continuing, she said that the applicants should also submit their job certificate along with the application and the Mysore City Corporation (MCC) Revenue Officers would visit the Help Centre and verify the same. As the officials would be signing the applications at the Help Centre it would be very useful and urged the respective community members to make use of the opportunity.

Nagesh of Madiwala Sangha, Shivashankar, Sunil, Abhishek, MCC Revenue Officers and others were present.

Obituary

Kamalamma

Mysuru, June 25- Kamalamma (72), wife of Eranna Swamy and a resident of Saraswathipuram 11th Main Road, passed away yesterday in city.

She leaves behind three sons, one daughter and a host of relatives and friends.

Last rites were performed at K.G. Koppal Burial Grounds this morning, according to family sources.

Hotels, Lodges, Home Stays in Kodagu closed for 21 days

- Four doctors of a Private Hospital in Madikeri test COVID-19 positive; total 26 cases
- 12 areas in Madikeri, Virajpet and Somwarpet Taluks sealed down for 28 days

Madikeri, June 25 (PS&BCT)- In view of the rising COVID-19 positive cases in Kodagu, all Hotels, Lodges and Home Stays will be closed for 21 days in the district from today.

The decision has been taken by Kodagu Hotel Association President B.R. Nagendra Prasad and Kodagu Home Stay Association President B.G. Ananthashayana. Also, all barber shops will be closed in Madikeri Taluk for 6 days.

At a press conference at Deputy Commissioner's Office in Madikeri this morning, DC Annies Kanmani Joy said that the Hotel and Home Stay Associations have voluntarily come forward to close their facilities till 21 days. The District Administration too is taking steps to close Resorts, Hotels, Lodges and Home Stays, she said.

The District Administration had been criticised for not closing down Resorts, Hotels and Home Stays despite rising COVID-19 positive cases. In all, till today morning, 26 positive cases have been reported in Kodagu and of them 23 cases are active. Interestingly, all the 23 persons were asymptomatic. All the 23 cases have been admitted to the designated COVID-19 Hospital in Madikeri.

Four doctors serving at Ashwini Hospital in Madikeri and three para-medical staff of the same Hospital have contracted the disease. The entire Hospital has been sanitised and there are eight in-patients. Now no service except emergency and OPD services are available in the Hospital. The DC has clarified that no doctor or a paramedical staff in the COVID Hospital has been tested positive. The clarification comes in the wake of reports that some of the doctors of the COVID Hospital had contracted the disease.

Retired soldier tests positive

A retired soldier who had come from Assam to Mullur village near Somwarpet, two car mechanics who are the contacts of a fruit merchant from Shirangala who tested positive recently, a woman from Doddahalli village, her husband and his brother tested positive.

A 70-year-old woman from Bittangala village who was running a Home Stay at Bittangala contracted the disease. The District Administration suspects that she has got the disease from her Home Stay guests. Efforts are on to trace the contact history. The son of a medical shop owner in Kushalnagar Car Street tested positive and the Car Street has been sealed.

In all, 12 areas including five in Madikeri, six in Somwarpet and one area in Virajpet Taluk have been sealed and barricades have been placed. The areas will be sealed down and considered as Containment Zones for 28 days. Vehicles and people have been barred from entering or exiting the areas.

No shortage of doctors

DC Annies Joy has stated that there is no dearth of doctors and paramedical staff in Kodagu. There are 250 beds in the COVID Hospital and if need be more beds will be ready in Virajpet and Somwarpet Taluks, she said. The DC added that the COVID sample testing laboratory was functioning 24X7 and per day, 380 samples were being tested. The results of many samples are yet to come, the DC added.

Meanwhile, the Kodagu District Chamber of Commerce has appealed to senior citizens in the District not to venture out of their homes and go to shops and business establishments. Also, all the shops and commercial establishments have been urged not to employ senior citizens and if they already have, they must be sent on leave till the pandemic is over.

Mysuru District reports first COVID-19 death

Mysuru, June 25 (RK&BCT)- Mysuru District reported its first COVID-19 death late on Tuesday. An 87-year-old man, who was undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Mysuru, succumbed to the virus. The man hailed from Bengaluru and his daughter was staying in an apartment in Mysuru.

According to the authorities from the District Administration, the deceased was undergoing treatment for respiratory complications at the private hospital. Reports said that as the senior citizen was unwell, his daughter brought him to Mysuru and on suggestions from the relatives, she took him to a private hospital doctor in K.R. Nagar on June 15.

Due to complications, he was shifted to a private hospital in Mysuru on June 22 where he died, said District Health Officer Dr. Venkatesh. Authorities collected throat swab samples and sent them for testing as it is mandatory. The result has come positive for COVID-19. His last rites were performed as per ICMR protocol.

It may be mentioned here that a man, who had recovered from COVID-19, died in May after being discharged from the hospital. He had several other co-morbidities and his death was not considered as a COVID death as he had tested negative and was discharged from the hospital.

Meanwhile, Mysuru District recorded seven fresh COVID-19 cases yesterday. With new cases, active cases increased to 76 as 10 persons recovered and were discharged. In yesterday's list of positives, three are from institutional quarantine and four are from home quarantine. The total positive cases reported from Mysuru is 198 with 122 patients discharged.

In the latest list of positives, there is a nine-year-old girl and a woman. A 23-year-old youth who returned from Andhra Pradesh, a 30-year-old man who returned from Rajasthan, 19-year-old youth, 30-year-old man and a 39-year-old woman who returned from Tamil Nadu, a 23-year-old KSRP Police Constable and the nine-year-old girl who was a primary contact of P-9569 have tested positive.

Mandya and Chamarajanagar

Mandya and Chamarajanagar reported two cases each yesterday. Both the cases in Mandya have a travel history of Maharashtra. With this, the total number of positive cases has gone up to 373. While 334 have been discharged, there are 39 active cases, treated in isolation wards of the designated COVID Hospital in Mandya.

Out of two cases in Chamarajanagar, a 25-year-old man had a travel history of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, while another 30-year-old man's contact is under tracing. The total positive cases is eight. While one is discharged, there are seven active cases.

In view of rising cases, all commercial activities between 6 pm and 6 am have been banned in Chamarajanagar. Under magisterial powers, Deputy Commissioner Dr. M.R. Ravi has imposed Section 144 in the district preventing trade from 6 pm to 6 am. Only essential services like medicines, fruits and vegetable shops, milk, petrol and diesel will be available during the closure hours.

Also, public entry to the famous Chamarajeshwara Temple in Chamarajanagar on Ashada Fridays (June 26, July 3, 10 and 17) and also on July 5 during Chamarajeshwara Rathotsava has been banned.

COVID safety: MCC embarks on mega sanitisation of Marketplaces in city centre

Mysuru, June 25 (RK&DM)- After ordering closure of five major Markets in the city centre for four days starting from today as a measure to check the spread of the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, the Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) began its task in right earnest by taking up cleaning works in the premises of Shivarampet, Santhepet, Mannars, Boti Bazar (Mutton Market) and Devaraja Markets this morning.

However, following a request from fruit and vegetable vendors of Devaraja Market, the MCC has permitted them to continue with their business till tomorrow (June 26) afternoon in order to enable them to clear their stocks or temporarily shift to elsewhere, as fruits and vegetables are perishable commodities.

During the four-day closure of the Marketplaces, the MCC will wholly water clean, sanitise, disinfect and fumigate the entire premises using men, liquids and machinery, as a safety measure in keeping with the guidelines issued by the Government to stop the spread of COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the closure order, all shops, commercial establishments and other business enterprises in Shivarampet area, Devaraja Market, Mannars Market in Shivarampet, Santhepet and Boti Bazar remained shut. The shops will reopen on Monday.

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SSLC exam begins under COVID cloud

Chamaraja MLA L. Nagendra at an exam centre.

(Continued from page 1)

Even in Mysuru, mock drills were conducted to ensure standard operating procedures are followed at all times. The teachers were called in and trained for thermal scanning and other checking procedures to be carried out.

Mysuru Deputy Commissioner Abhiram G. Sankar informed in a Facebook live message yesterday that the District Administration had taken all precautions issued by the Government and ensuring that the guidelines are being strictly followed. "We have been working for the last two weeks to put everything in place for the examination ensuring they maintain social distancing, wear a mask and sanitise," he added.

Public entry ban

Entry of the public has been banned near the premises of schools to ensure the safety of the students and staff. All the entrances of the exam centres were barricaded and there was only one entry and exit. Beyond barricades, only students were allowed by walk and circles / boxes were marked for the students to stand and walk one-by-one. Police personnel were deployed to avoid crowding near exam centres.

Soon after the exams ended at 1.30 pm, public announcements were made at all exam centres asking the students to leave for home immediately without loitering around or discussing the question paper. The students were advised not to roam around the city areas and return home with their parents who were waiting outside the exam centres.

Group testing

At the N.R. Mohalla Government School exam centre, a private company 'CDS Vision' conducted successful screening of students in groups. To smoothen the process of thermal screening, a group of 20 students were screened in one go using an advanced thermal scanner and the results were flashed in the laptop connected to the thermal scanner.

Student convinced to write alone

One of the students in the Containment Zone refused to write exam in a separate room and insisted that she will write the exam along with others. She said that as her swab samples tested negative, she should not be separated from other students.

After much convincing and coaxing by authorities and Health Department personnel that it was for her safety and the safety of other students she has to write the exam separately, the student relented and sat in a separate room. For her to face the exam confidently, officials stayed in the room, not leaving the student alone.

22 positive cases

(Continued from page 1)

A 38-year-old male from Devegowda Circle contracted the disease. This apart, three persons who had a travel history of Bengaluru, 25-year-old male from Ravandoor in Periyapatna, 87-year-old male from Vishweshwaranagar in Mysuru and a 21-year-old male from KSRP Jockey Quarters, tested positive today. While two of them took a private vehicle to Bengaluru, the other took his office vehicle.

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